

Getting Ready for Breastfeeding



Breastfeeding is the best choice for you and your baby. Over 99% of women can nurse!

Types of Nipples

There are three nipple types. Sometimes the nipple is not the same on both breasts. Most nipples are **erect nipples** that stick out. Some women have **flat nipples**. Flat nipples may come out when a woman is cold or sexually aroused. Flat nipples are often more erect after the baby is born. **Inverted nipples** look like small slits or folds. You can tell if a nipple is inverted by doing a "pinch test." Gently pinch the base of the nipple with your thumb and finger. If the nipple sinks in, it is inverted. Women with all types of nipples can breastfeed. And breasts of all sizes make plenty of milk.

Nipple Preparation

Avoid pulling on your nipples or rubbing them with a towel to "toughen them up" while you are pregnant. If your nipples do not come out when your baby is born, your doctor or midwife may give you "breast shells." These are plastic rings that push the nipple out. You do not need to use breast shells while you are pregnant. A healthy baby gently pulls out the nipple simply by nursing.

What is Colostrum?

Colostrum is the first milk made by your breasts. It is there in the last half of pregnancy and first days after birth. Colostrum is a thick yellow fluid full of food and antibodies (to keep your baby from getting sick). You may see it leaking out before your baby is born. This is normal. Avoid pushing out colostrum by hand during pregnancy.

***Learn about breastfeeding before your baby is born.
Plan now to give your baby the best start in life!***